



# COMMON CARP

*Cyprinus carpio*



KARPER



CARPA



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## Geographical Distribution

The carp is originally from Eastern Europe and Western Asia, having been introduced by the Romans in Italy, and from there spread to other European countries. It is one of the most diffused species across the globe and the oldest entry in the Iberian Peninsula, probably since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In Portugal the carp can be found in all water basins.



## Habitat

Carp are usually found in still or slowly flowing waters at low altitudes, especially in areas where there is abundant aquatic vegetation. They are also found in brackish lower reaches of some rivers and coastal lakes.

## Description

The carp can be distinguished by having a pair of barbels (whiskers) at each corner of their mouth. They have small eyes, thick lips, a forked tail and a single dorsal (top) fin with strongly serrated spines.

Carp can grow to a very large size, weights of around 4-5 kg are more common.

## Feeding behavior

Carp are omnivorous, and their diet varies depending on what is available. They consume a range of small food items such as mollusks, crustaceans, insect larvae and seeds. They can also consume plant material and general organic matter, especially when other food sources are not available (during winter, for example).

## Fishing

**Closed season:** April 15-May 15. **Minimum retention size:** 20 cm.

The carp is one of the freshwater fish most caught by anglers because of the large size that can reach and the strong resistance that opposes. In Central and Eastern Europe is consumed regularly, in Asia is widely used enough to be one of the most important fish in Chinese aquaculture.